



Vintage Production California LLC

A subsidiary of Occidental Petroleum Corporation



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June 26, 2007

Mr. Dane Mathis
California Regional Water Quality
Control Board - Central Valley Region
1685 E Street
Fresno, CA 93706-2020

**Subject: Notice of Tentative Waste Discharge Requirement
Kern Front Field Exiting NPDES Permit # CA0083852 ("Tentative Order")**

Dear Mr. Mathis:

Vintage Production California ("VPC") is in receipt of the Tentative Order reflecting changes to our discharge limits and rescission of our current NPDES Permit # CA0083852. On June 26th I spoke with Mr. Dale Harvey of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (the "Board") who advised that VPC, as applicant, would have through close of business on June 28, 2007 to provide comments on the proposed Tentative Order. We have the following comments.

VPC feels strongly that we were not given adequate opportunity to work with the Board's staff to discuss the details of this draft permit and the supporting documentation prior to the Tentative Order being issued and placed on the Board agenda for approval on August 2 and 3, 2007. VPC originally applied for this permit on May 29, 2001. We understand that staff's resources are limited and that there are a number of similar permits pending approval in the queue. There has only been limited discussion over the course of 6 years and no recent opportunity to work with staff to develop a permit that is based on information and assumptions that are complete and accurate. As a result, we have identified several significant errors and inaccurate assumptions forming the basis for the Tentative Order. Accordingly, VPC respectfully requests the Tentative Order be removed from August Board meeting and deferred until such time as VPC and staff can develop a permit based on accurate and complete information.

Although we have several issues with the Tentative Order, we feel the following are the most significant issues:

1. As discussed in the background information and throughout the Tentative Order, the Board erroneously states that the discharger historically uses the ditch when the Valley Waste Disposal site is unavailable. VPC utilizes this discharge point on an as-needed basis in conjunction with various other water disposal methods, one of which is the Valley Waste Disposal site. Historically it has been the "last resort" method to dispose of water, but not because other options are not available.

2. While monthly testing is required for constituents in the water, we would request that only annual reports summarizing this information be submitted to the Board, as opposed to monthly reporting. Part of the reason we agreed to rescind and replace our existing NPDES permit was to streamline the reporting requirements. Annual reports will incorporate all the necessary information to document compliance with the permit conditions and standards.
3. VPC understands the need for the Board to try to comply with the Basin Plan requirements for boron, however, VPC's existing NPDES permit allows for higher boron levels for one of our four discharge points. This was done because boron levels in parts of the Kern Front Field are occasionally over the 1 mg/l level. The water that would be discharged at this point is now being processed in other water treatment systems. The fact that this discharge point has been combined with another discharge points does not change the fact that boron levels in the produced water can exceed 1 mg/l.

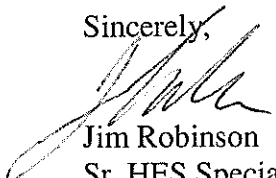
Moreover, VPC's existing NPDES permit allows for certain volumes at certain concentrations of constituents in certain areas. To help simplify this permit, VPC would commit to modifying it to allow for one discharge point with an annual average discharge level of 0.68 MGD or a rate of 6.25mgd for 40 days. In doing so the Board can allow for a higher boron level discharge based on the existing Houghton HydroGeologic Study. This study documents that at these discharge levels, the water does not reach groundwater. I have been advised that staff agrees with the results of the aforementioned study. This in turn would allow staff to issue the permit for boron levels higher than the Basin Plan since it will not impact groundwater. VPC is committing to significantly reduced discharge volume to reflect the conditions in the approved and well documented Houghton Hydro Geologic Study.

This scenario would also comply with any anti-backsliding challenge, as these boron higher limits are already allowed by the existing permit.

Again, based on these significant issues, we would respectfully request that the Tentative Order be removed from the Board's August agenda so that staff and VPC can work to develop a reasonable and workable permit based on accurate and complete information. We welcome the opportunity to discuss these and other important changes to this draft Tentative Order with staff and commit to timely communications so this revised permit can be placed on the Board's agenda within the next few months.

Please contact me at (661) 332-0343 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Jim Robinson
Sr. HES Specialist